

Application No. 09/101,341
Attorney's Docket No. 000500-128

a bath which contains a water-miscible organic solvent and a cross-linker.

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2. (Amended) A method of producing polysaccharide fibres according to [in accordance with] claim 1, further comprising the steps of [characterized by] stretching, rolling-up, drying and cutting the polysaccharide fibres after the bath.

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3. (Twice Amended) A method of producing polysaccharide fibres according to claim 1, wherein [characterized in that] the organic solvent is an alcohol or a ketone.

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4. (Amended) A method of producing polysaccharide fibres according to claim 3, wherein [characterized in that] the organic solvent is methanol, ethanol, isopropanol or acetone.

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5. (Twice Amended) A method of producing polysaccharide fibres according to [in accordance with] claim 1, wherein [characterized in that] the cross-linker is a polyelectrolyte.

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6. (Amended) A method of producing polysaccharide fibres according to claim 5, wherein [characterized in that] the cross-linker is polyvinylamine or Polybrene® (hexadimethrinbromide).

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7. (Twice Amended) A method of producing polysaccharide fibres according to claim 1, wherein [characterized in that] the cross-linker is a salt where the cation in the salt is a metal ion.

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8. (Amended) A method of producing polysaccharide fibres according to claim 7, wherein [characterized in that] the cation in the salt is divalent, trivalent or quadrivalent.

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9. (Amended) A method of producing polysaccharide fibres according to claim 8, wherein [characterized in that] the cation in the salt is calcium, magnesium, iron, aluminium or zirconium.

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10. (Twice Amended) A method of producing polysaccharide fibres according to claim 7, wherein

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[characterized in that] the anion in the metal salt is chloride.

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11. (Twice Amended) A method of producing polysaccharide fibres according to claim 1, wherein [characterized in that] the polysaccharide is comprised of carboxymethyl cellulose, starch, cellulose xanthane, gelan, chitin, chitosan, guar gum or alginate.

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12. (Twice Amended) A method of producing polysaccharide fibres according to [in accordance with] claim 1, further comprising the step of [characterized by] cross-linking the fibre covalently in a following stage.

13. (Twice Amended) A polysaccharide fibre, comprising a polysaccharide fibre [characterized by] having been produced according to the method [in accordance with] claim 1.

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14. (Amended) A polysaccharide fibre according to claim 13, wherein [characterized in that] the fibre has been

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solvent-spun and has a degree of substitution greater than 0.35, is cross-linked, and insoluble, but swellable, in water.

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15. (Twice Amended) An absorbent structure in an absorbent article, [such as a diaper, an incontinence guard or a sanitary napkin,] wherein [characterized in that] the absorbent structure includes polysaccharide fibres having been produced according to [in accordance with] claim 1.

Please add new Claims 16-19 as follows:

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--16. The absorbent structure according to claim 15, wherein the absorbent article is selected from the group consisting of a diaper, an incontinence guard and a sanitary napkin.

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17. A method of producing polysaccharide fibres according to claim 1, wherein the cross-linker ionically cross-links the polysaccharide.